



# NEWS

*from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

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## **CRANK BAIT OR DRY FLY?** **BASS AND TROUT FISHING LURE DIFFERENT ANGLERS**

Bass and trout fishing are the focus of two reports recently developed by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. *Black Bass Fishing in the U.S.* and *Trout Fishing in the U.S.* include information on demographic characteristics of bass and trout anglers as well as participation levels and how they compare with other freshwater fishing statistics.

Designed to complement the 1991 *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*, the new reports highlight information specifically related to bass and trout fishing. This information is compared to the number of anglers who participated in any type of freshwater fishing; how many days they spent angling; and their age, gender, and education and income levels. The reports also include breakdowns of anglers by geographic region and population density. All data in the bass and trout reports represent freshwater anglers 16 years of age and older who fished in the United States in 1991.

Black bass (including largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass) appealed to more anglers than any other fish the Survey covered. Of the 30 million freshwater anglers in the U.S., 12.9 million, or 43 percent, fished for bass. Overall patterns show bass anglers tend to be male, have above-average incomes, and live in southern and urban areas.

Just over 9 million, or 30 percent of freshwater anglers, fished for trout (including rainbow, brown, brook, and lake trout). Overall patterns for trout anglers show they also tend to be male, have above-average incomes, and most often live in the western or northeastern regions of the country.

Eighty percent of bass anglers and 77 percent of trout anglers were male. For freshwater fishing overall, 8.4 million women fished, representing 27 percent of all anglers.

Anglers fished for bass on more than 158 million days for an average of 12 days, while trout anglers fished on more than 81 million days for an average of 9 days. This means bass were sought on 37 percent of all freshwater fishing days and trout on 19 percent.

Bass fishing was most popular in Florida, Maryland, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Delaware. In the South, bass fishing is pursued most often in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, North Carolina, and Texas. Trout fishing was most favored in Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming. In addition to western states, trout fishing is popular in the Northeast, especially in Maine, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Pennsylvania.

More bass anglers (28 percent) fall between the ages of 25 and 34 years than any other age group. Twenty-eight percent of trout anglers are also from that age group. The 35- to 44-year-old age group makes up 25 percent of both bass and trout anglers. For both bass and trout fishing, 53 percent of anglers are between the ages of 25 and 44.

Both bass and trout anglers' participation rates increased with their education levels. Anglers with up to 11 years of education participated in bass fishing at a rate of 37 percent; those with 12 years of education, 43 percent; those with 1 to 3 years of college education, 45 percent; and those with 4 or more years of college, 45 percent. For trout fishing, anglers with up to 11 years of education participated at a rate of 23 percent; those with 12 years of education, 23 percent; those with 1 to 3 years of college education, 34 percent; and those with 4 or more years of college, 35 percent.

Overall, freshwater anglers had somewhat higher annual incomes than the national average of about \$30,000. Fifty-four percent of bass anglers and 55 percent of trout anglers came from households with incomes above the national average.

The participation rate of freshwater anglers in bass fishing was highest for the \$25,000 to \$29,900 income bracket (46 percent) while the highest participation rate for trout fishing was in the \$75,000 or more income category (39 percent).

People in rural areas participated in freshwater fishing almost twice as much as urban residents. However, bass fishing was about the same for all population density categories, which included rural, small city or town, or big city or urban area. The popularity of trout fishing, as judged by participation rates, was similar for rural and small city residents but much greater among urban dwellers.

The highest percentage of bass anglers lived in the South Atlantic Census Region (Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida), with 21 percent. The East North Central Region (Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois) had the next highest percentage of bass anglers, 19 percent. The highest percentages

of trout anglers lived in the Pacific Region (Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, Hawaii), with 29 percent; the Mountain Region (Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Idaho), with 18 percent; and the Middle Atlantic Region (New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey), with 18 percent.

An earlier report in this series provides fishing statistics specifically on women, blacks, and Hispanics. *Participation and Expenditure Patterns of Black, Hispanic, and Women Hunters and Anglers* showed nearly 10 million, or about 10 percent, of women fished; nearly 2 million, or 10 percent, of blacks fished; and more than 1 million, or 8 percent, of Hispanics did.

This report provides comparisons between these sub-populations and the total population of hunters and anglers on several characteristics including age, education, income, and place of residence. These comparisons are made for days, trips, and expenditures of participants.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Census Bureau conduct the *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation* every 5 years to determine trends in outdoor recreation. Since 1955, the Survey has provided the only comprehensive statistical data available related to participation and expenditures on hunting, fishing, and (since 1980) wildlife-watching.

To gather information for the 1991 Survey, nearly 120,000 households were initially contacted, with a portion of individuals then tracked throughout the year to determine participation and expenditure levels. The Survey covering 1996 data is due in November 1997.

Copies of *Bass Fishing in the U.S.*; *Trout Fishing in the U.S.*; and *Participation and Expenditure Patterns of Black, Hispanic, and Women Hunters and Anglers* are available from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Publications Unit, 4040 North Fairfax Drive MS 130, Arlington, Virginia, 22203; telephone 703-358-1711.